

Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) Guidelines and Procedures for the Policy Development Process 2008 Quick Reference Guide

Why Policies?

CFSA policies educate and inform staff, contracted agencies and entities in the community that interface with the Agency. Policies also define internal Agency relationships, as well as relationships between the Agency and outside organizations. By defining administrative responsibility, policies serve to promote consistency, efficiency, and professionalism, as well as standardizing the methods by which organizational goals and objectives are achieved. In addition to providing a formal mechanism for the introduction of best practices, all CFSA policies and procedures satisfy requirements imposed by federal and District of Columbia mandates, including statutes, regulations, and/or court orders.

Purpose of the Executive Policy Team (EPT)

The Executive Policy Team is a decision-making group of Child and Family Services Agency staff that is specifically responsible for the review and approval of all policy documents. Members of the EPT include the Agency Director, all Deputy Directors, the Policy Unit Staff, Office of the General Counsel, the Director of External and Interagency Affairs and others as designated by the Executive Policy Team.

The Request Process

Requests for new policies/procedures must first be submitted through the requestor's chain of command up to the Deputy Director of the appropriate administration for consideration by the EPT.

1. If a request is denied, the Policy Unit will forward reasons for the denial to the requesting Deputy Director within five (5) business days of the denial.
2. If the EPT approves the request, a Policy Specialist and an Assistant General Counsel (AGC) shall be assigned within three (3) business days of EPT approval. A response to the requesting Deputy Director shall be made within five (5) business days of the approval. An Executive Sponsor shall be assigned at the EPT for the purpose of providing leadership support to the Policy Specialist. The EPT may also recommend potential stakeholders who shall be invited to participate in the policy initiative work group.

The Development Process

The Policy Specialist shall request an initial planning meeting with the Executive Sponsor within two (2) business days of the policy being approved for development. The Policy Specialist shall also conduct background research, identify possible stakeholders for a work group, clarify expectations and initial working agreements, and work with the Executive Sponsor to establish a work group and to draft a work plan.

1. The Executive Sponsor shall chair the initial work group meeting. The work group shall review and, when necessary, revise the work plan, as well as further identify and/or develop process changes, and identify any training, fiscal and legal issues. (The Executive Sponsor shall spearhead assessment of fiscal-related implications.)
2. The AGC shall provide the work group with any applicable or related statutes, regulations, court orders, or memoranda of understanding no later than the first work group meeting.
3. Once the Policy Specialist has made all final revisions and the policy initiative has been determined to be legally sufficient, it shall be submitted to EPT for discussion and approval. The EPT shall authorize submission to the Agency Director.
4. Signed program policies and procedures shall be submitted to the Center for the Study of Social Policies (CSSP) as appropriate. If CSSP requests revisions, the Policy Specialist shall contact the Executive Sponsor within three (3) days of receipt.
5. With the assistance of the Policy Specialist, the Executive Sponsor shall develop a plan for implementation and training for presentation to the EPT.